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LIFE OF MARGARET SHIPPEN, WIFE OF BENEDICT
ARNOLD.

BY LEWIS BURD WALKER.

(Continued from page 80.)

PHILADA. 20th Jany. 1796.

MY DEAR PEGGY,

I am much pleased to hear by your Letters to your Sisters that you are in tolerable health. I shall be better pleased to hear of your perfect Recovery which from the soundness of your Constitution & the good advice you are surrounded with, we are sanguine enough to expect. I must at the same time suggest that in most chronical Cases Experience proves an Attention to diet and a strict regimen is generally more available than any other thing the faculty can prescribe: indeed in those cases it is little more than a Compliance with form to consult Physicians at all. I have myself long done with them, being convinced from a steady attention to my own case that they are able to do very little, if anything more for me than I can do for myself. The headache which has afflicted me for four years & upwards I know proceeds from the Stomach, I therefore direct all my attention to that Organ. If I transgress ever so little either in quality or quantity of food I am certain of being tormented with 3 or 4 hours headache; if on the contrary I intirely refrain from animal food or take only a very small quantity of the lightest kind & subsist chiefly on milk & Vegetables I am as certain of escaping every symptom of the Complaint. This you will say, is having a disorder more in my own power than most people have; this is true, but in a certain degree it is the same with every chronick Case.

I am descending fast into the Vale of years, and altho I seem now to have some command over my disorder, yet I cannot reasonably expect it will long continue. You are in the prime of life, and if you should find abstinence as much a Remedy as I have done, the good Effects may possibly continue with you for a long Course of Years—which Heaven Grant!

I find you have passed some time in the Country during the

last Summer, which I concluded must have been the Case from our not hearing from you for Six or Eight Months.

You have mentioned to Sally that Swanwick's Bill is paid, but I have not yet heard of the fate of Mr. Wilcock's Bill, which however I presume must have been honoured, or you would have returned it with a protest.

I now inclose you a Bill for £100 Sterling drawn by Peter Blight which I purchased at the rate of 60 per cent advance, Exchange being now lower than usual; I could I believe, have got one for 58 but not from so substantial a Drawer.

I have lately at the request of your Sisters, got my Picture taken by one Mr. Stewart, who is said to have been eminent in London;—it is thought to be a strong likeness; I have therefore employed a Mr. Trot a young man of talents in that way to take a Copy of it in miniature. When finished I shall embrace the first good Opportunity of transmitting it to you, as I flatter myself it will be an acceptable present.

My best Love to all your family. I am my dear Child

Your affectionate father.

PHILADA. 19th April 1796.

MY DEAR PEGGY,

I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 12th of January and was made truly happy by hearing of the Recovery of your health, as well as of the good prospects of your two sons. I sincerely pray that every Blessing may attend you & yours. I observe Swanwick's Bill is paid, and hope the same as to Peter Blight's Bill for £100 Sterling which I transmitted to you in January last.

I mentioned to you in my last that I meant to send you a small portrait taken from an excellent picture drawn for me by Mr. Stewart. I accordingly embrace the Opportunity of Mr. Alexander Foster's going to London, to forward it to you; he has been kind enough to promise to deliver it himself. I am not certain whether this Gentleman is known to you or not. You may probably have heard that he formerly paid his Addresses to your Sister Sally. And altho he was not a favored Lover & she preferred another Gentleman, he still I am told continues his Admiration of her, but without any prospect of Success; he has made a handsome fortune by trade & if he could divest himself

of this Attachment might still be happy in a matrimonial Connection.

Our Congress is now deliberating upon the Treaty with Great Britain, and altho some warmth has appeared & there is a majority who dislike the treaty; Yet I have no doubt they will finally make the Appropriations necessary to carry it into Execution. All the Commercial Cities are daily petitioning them to that Effect.

My real Love and best wishes attend you, My dear Child.

I am &c.

PHILADELPHIA 26th July 1796.

MY DEAR PEGGY,

Your favor of the 2nd May now before me affords me real pleasure, as it promises an effectual remedy for your Disorder. If there is any one Specific for Chronical Complaints, it is certainly Abstinence.

I have received the Amount of Peter Blight's protested Bill together with the 20 per cent Damages & costs of protest, and immediately laid out the money in another Bill drawn by John Swanwick in my favor for £120.7.0 Sterling. I have likewise purchased another Bill of John Swanwick for £100. Sterling out of money arising from the Interest of your Securities & dividends of Bank Shares in my hands. Exchange at 162½ p. C. advance: both these Bills I have indorsed to Messrs Dorset & Co for your Use & herein inclose.

I hope before this you have received the Picture I promised you, it was committed to the care of Mr. Alex. Foster a merchant who went passenger in the Ship — and sailed from hence about the 1st of May & promised to deliver it himself. I am made happy in believing it will be to you an acceptable present. You may be assured my dear Child, I can never be unmindful of you. I know the tenderness of your nature, and that your affectionate Endeavors, would not be wanting to contribute to the comfort of my latter days, if our evil Stars had not separated us.

There is one disagreeable business, which I am always averse to make the Subject of our Correspondence. I mean the business of your Brother Edward. I have repeatedly tried what could be done with Footman, who always says that what with

the Losses they sustained in Common with almost all others who followed trade at that time together with Neddy's Expenses in going abroad & settling & maintaining his family in Philadelphia, there is nothing left to satisfy your demand. I believe only a part of this Story, but am obliged to rest satisfied with it. As however he is my Son & has an encreasing family which are and must be dependant upon me for a support unless he can be put into some Situation to enable him to make provision for them himself, which this heavy debt while it hangs over him will forever obstruct.

I have therefore conceived the Idea of endeavouring to compound it for him provided I can do it without incumbering my own Affairs for the short time I have to live. I would therefore make this proposition for your & G. A's Consideration, which you will either accept or reject as you think proper without any fear of giving me the least displeasure by either Alternative.

As a consideration for discharging him from the demand, I would agree to give my Obligation for the sum of fifteen hundred pounds sterling; the principal to become payable within one year after my decease, but the Interest of Six per cent to be regularly paid upon it every year during my Life. If this proposition should be accepted and the Bond delivered up with a discharge and acknowledgement of Satisfaction of the Judgment entered in our Supreme Court, (which may be done by empowering Mr. John Mifflin the Attorney who obtained the Judgment, or any other person for that purpose) I will then execute a Bond to Mr Burd as your Trustee, for the Sum and on the terms above mentioned.

In this attempt of mine to get Neddy discharged of a debt, which he will never be able to pay, I have no View ever to put it again in his power to trade or make any improper use of Money, but simply to give him some heart to use his endeavours to maintain his family: the present plan for that purpose is this Doctor McIlvaine has all the best medical business at Burlington, but being often confined with the Gout sometimes attended with dangerous symptoms, is under the necessity of declining a great part of his business, which he might retain if he could join himself in partnership with a healthy, active Man who could take the laborious part, of riding &c.; for this purpose he expresses a willingness to take your brother into the business; this we think affords a reasonable prospect of procuring (at least in part) a

present Support for his family, and probably in the end lay the foundation of his succeeding Doctor McIlvaine in his whole business whenever he shall be obliged or disposed to decline it altogether.

The Family are all well & join me most cordially in wishing you & yours all imaginable happiness.

I am &c.

PHILADA. 12th Aug. 1796.

MY DEAR PEGGY,

This serves to inclose second Bills of two Setts transmitted to you about a fortnight since, one for £120.7.0 Sterling being the Amo^t of Peter Blight's protested Bill for £100. with Damages, the other a new Draft for £100 Sterling. The first Bills of these Setts I sent you in a letter of the 26th of last month, in which I acquainted you of my having sent the Picture by Mr. Alex. Foster, and in which I likewise mentioned a proposition relating to your Brother Edward. That Letter I hope you have received before this. I think it went by a Ship called the Hebe.

My best Love attends you & yours. My dear daughter

most affectionately yours

E. S.

PHILADA. 6 April, 1797.

MY DEAR PEGGY,

I am much rejoiced to learn by your letter to your Sister Burd that you are in a fair way of being restored to your health. I was indeed much alarmed at the Situation you described in your favor to me of the 7th of October last. I hope by Care and Attention (qualities you always possessed) together with the best medical assistance, you will be in no danger of falling a Sacrifice to such dreadful Attacks as you have lately been subject to.

I am pleased to hear that Swanwick's Bills are paid; I have for some time past supposed that to be the Case, or I should have long ago received a protest for non-payment. It is not easy of late to meet with Bills of Exchange drawn by such men as are altogether unexceptionable.

The Spirit of Enterprize has of late stalked with such gigantic Strides as to infatuate all ranks of people, and there is by no

means such Confidence in men of reputed fortunes and prudence as used to exist. I have however faith in the inclosed Bill for £140 Sterling drawn by Willings & Francis, for which I gave what is called par, viz 16½ p Cent advance. I have endorsed it as usual to Messrs. Dorset & Company for your use.

The Bank of Pennsylvania received a little shock last Winter by the Misbehavior of Mr. Barclay the President, but it soon recovered after an inspection into its funds and is now in as good credit as ever. Shares in that bank sell at 20 p cent advance.

The plan relating to your Brother's Debt, must I believe at present rest. I have many reasons for not wishing to take an Assignment of his Bond.

We are all sorry to hear that Lord Malmsbury's Mission has failed of Success, we had hopes of Peace, they appear now to be blasted and we in some danger of being implicated in the War. We shall however be very shy upon that Subject, and nothing short of hard blows will bring us to it.

I presume your Sister Betsy will give you the history of your Cousin Nancy Allen's Affair. Women as well as Men seem in these days to be alike infatuated. I would if possible have assisted the family in this business, having a grateful remembrance of their friendly Offices to you, when you were last with us, but I fear nothing will prevent that charming Girl from rushing into destruction.

My best Love to you And all that you love.

I am &c.

PHILADA. 28th October 1797.

MY DEAR PEGGY,

Not having heard from you for many months, & your Sister Betsy having rece'd a Letter from you by the William Penn without your mentioning a Remittance I made you last April, I am apprehensive either that my Letters have not been received or your Answer miscarried. On the 6th April last I enclosed you a Bill of Exchange drawn by Willing & Francis on John & Francis Baring & Co dated the 5th April 1797 for £140 Sterling in my favor payable on [] days Sight & by me indorsed to Messrs Dorset & Company for your Use. One Bill of the Sett went by the packet & another by the Brig Friendship. I cannot but hope one of them at least got safe to hand.

We returned but yesterday from the Country after an Absence of near three months on Acco't of the Yellow Fever in the City, which has at length subsided, & we esteem ourselves safe in our old habitation; the great number of the Citizens who retired into the Country on this Occasion, has been probably the Cause of the fever not proving so fatal as in the year 1793, when four times the number died in the same time. I am happy to inform you that none of our friends have felt the ill Effects of it. I have been for the greater part of this month on the Circuit and have one more County to go to before I settle down for the Winter.

My kind Love to all your family & friends. I am &c

P.S. lest any Accident may have happened to my former letters, I inclose you the third Bill of the Sett.

PHILADA. 16th July 1798.

MY DEAR PEGGY,

We have had such alarming Accounts respecting the intended Invasion & probable Success of the all-powerful Frenchmen against your devoted Country that my feelings regarding you have been all alive & I have delayed writing till some favourable Accots should arrive that I might be sure a letter would reach you in London.

And altho' we do not yet hear of any Suspension of preparations for that purpose, yet I cannot now but conclude either that the Invasion has been declined or if attempted will finally fail. Our Situation here is indeed critical. We have mortally offended the Conqueror of the World by making a Treaty with England without their leave & in some respects unfavourable to their Commerce. For this Offence we are never to be forgiven, and are threatened with all the Evils they have inflicted upon Venice, & Switzerland. Our Ladies particularly are fearful of a Visit, if not of the Guillotine, and are meditating some plans of Retreat from the large Cities, where the depredations are most likely to fall. I have myself no apprehensions of that kind. We are making such preparations for their reception & there seems to be of late such Unanimity in our people on the Subject of Resistance that any Attempt upon us must prove fatal to themselves. Our naval force is already such as to put our coast-

ing trade out of danger, & no privateers will hereafter venture to consider this as cruising Ground. We have lately brought one of them into port, and altho no express declaration of War has yet taken place, Yet this Vessel is considered as fair game, having made some prizes on the Coast, & will probably be condemned. War is a great Evil & I pray God to defend us all from the direful Effects of it.

I inclose you a Bill of Exchange for £130 Sterling purchased at par indorsed as usual to Messrs. Dorset & Co for your Use.

Really the times have been so critical, & there has been such a Revolution as to the Fortunes of our Merchants that it has not been an easy matter to get Bills free from some Risk. I know not the drawer of this Bill, but the Indorser, Mordecai Lewis is certainly safe, if there is any Safety among us.

The Family are all well & join me in best Love to you & Yours.

PHILADA., 18th Febr'y. 1799.

MY DEAR PEGGY,

I was rejoiced to receive your affectionate Letter of the 28th Oct., having received none before for a long time. Some time after my return from our Asylum in the Country, a young Gentleman called on me, of the name of Sheddon, who enquired whether I had received a Letter from you, of which he was the Bearer. On my answering in the negative, he informed me that having arrived at New York, and not then thinking it safe on account of the Sickness to proceed to Philada., he had committed the care of it to young Andrew Allen his fellow Passenger. This Letter however has never come to hand, nor did Mr. Allen ever call upon me, to make any Apology till about a fortnight ago, having then heard from many of his friends that I had frequently complained of his Negligence. All he could then say was that he had put the Letter into the Post Office at Bristol not knowing the place of my retirement in the Country. Mr. Sheddon was certainly not to blame, he has been several times since at our house & complains much of Mr. Allen's uncivil behaviour.

I was very happy to hear of your receiving benefit to your health from Sea bathing: it should of course be repeated at the proper Season. I am likewise much pleased at the good Spirits you seem to enjoy from the favourable Circumstances you men-

tion with regard to your Sons. God grant you may be made happy in their prosperity & that of the rest of your family.

I am much delighted to hear of your acquaintance with my old & good friend Mrs. Willis. I remember her & the kindness she manifested to me with ye greatest pleasure. I felt a warmth at my heart in reading her tender expressions with regard to me which you have detailed. Your Saucy Sister Sally charges me with betraying much Vanity in shewing your letter to many of our friends; it could only be, she says, to exhibit Mrs. Willis's flattering Sentiments in my favour.

I inclose you a Bill of Exchange for £150 Sterling which I purchased at the moderate Exchange of 57½ p Ct advance. I have as usual indorsed it to Dorset & Co for your use.

Some of your money has been paid in, and am now considering of the best way of Disposing of it. Our Government has advertised for a loan of five Millions of Dollars at 8 p Cent Interest. The Subscriptions are all to be made on the same day & there is no doubt of their filling immediately. I am balancing between a Subscription to this loan & buying 6 p Cent Stock which may now be had at 160 in the pound. Bank Stock of the United States sells at 20 p Cent advance, and that of the Bank of Pennsylvania at about the same price: the North America Bank stock is much higher & seldom to be got, the last that was sold brought 50 p Cent advance; the Dividends of the last are generally *12 p Cent* per annum on the original Subscriptions, the 2 former at about 8 p cent.

Our Quarrel with the French is not yet made up; their late bad Success in Europe has in some degree lowered their tone, but no serious advances have been yet made by them towards an Accommodation. We are determined to be in a State of preparation for fear of the worst, Congress have voted for an Equipment of Six 74 Gun Ships, besides a large number of smaller armed Vessels. Our trade is already rendered safer by the frigates and armed Ships which are already on the Ocean, besides the benefits we have received from British Convoys.

6 March 1799.

MY DEAR PEGGY,

I wrote you by the Chesterfield packet, the 18th of last month; my letter together with the whole mail was sunk by the Captain at New York, out of resentment for being served with a Writ.

(Here I repeat part of former letter.)

I inclose you second Bill of Exchange for £150 Sterling (the first having been sunk with the mail) which I purchased at 57½ p Cent advance, & have as usual indorsed it to Dorset & Co. for your use. Some of your money has been paid in, and I am taking advantage of a loan to our Government of 5 Millions of dollars at 8 p' cent Interest; the Subscriptions have much exceeded the loan, so that none will get the whole of what they subscribed; what the deductions from each Subscription will be, is not yet known; but I expect for you about 1400 dollars.

Bank Stock of the United States sells at about 23 p. cent advance, that of Pennsylvania at about 20, & the North America at 45 p cent, which last is seldom to be got.

We have had Mr. Sheddon frequently with us, on the presumption that your lost letter contained a Recommendation of him.

PHILADA 10th July 1799

MY DEAR PEGGY,

I much fear my two last Letters have miscarried, one dated 18th Feby last & the other on the 6th of March containing first & Second Bills of a Sett of Exchange for £150 Sterling at Sixty days sight by Philips Cramond & Co on Messrs Thellusson Brothers, London dated 18th Feby 1799 in my favour & by me indorsed to Messrs Dorset & Company or Order: the Letter which inclosed the first of the Sett was intended to be sent by the Chesterfield packet & was forwarded by the post to New York for that purpose. In some Squabbel between the Capt of the packet & the Sheriffs Officer at New York, the Mail was thrown overboard & the Merchants here were advised to forward Duplicates of their Letters to be sent by the same Vessel. I did the like, but I afterwards learnt, that the first Letters were recovered, so it is most probable both Letters went in the same Vessel. I have lately seen an Account in the Newspaper of the Chesterfield packet having been captured by the French. I therefore now inclose you the third Bill of the Sett, altho' it is the only remaining one in my hands.

Some of your Money having been paid into my hands last Winter, I thought proper to invest it in Subscriptions to a loan of the Government at the Interest of 8 p cent p annum. I could only at first get in 1400 dollars, but some time after I purchased

an additional 1400 dollars at 5 p cent advance on the first payment. This sum of 2800 dollars I pay in by 8 monthly installments, at 350 dollars each month, the last payment to be made on the 10th of October next. I have now paid in 5 of the Installments & shall soon be intitled to Certificates carrying 8 p cent, Interest for one half of the Subscription; the Certificates for the other half of the Installments will I presume be delivered in October when the whole will be paid into the treasury. This mode of investing your money I believe will be the most beneficial for you, as I expect the Interest will be regularly paid half yearly.

The Family are all well & join with me in every Wish for your health & happiness.

I am &c.

PHILADA 1st Nov 1799

DR PEGGY;

On the other side you will find a copy of the last Letter I wrote by the Ship *Adriana*, which I hope came safely to your hands. Since which I have received your agreeable favor of the 9th of August, wherein you express your Apprehensions of our Safety, on account of the prevailing fever which has raged here for about three months past;—it has now, thank God, intirely subsided and we consequently a few days past returned to our usual habitation in the City, all perfectly well.

You seem very desirous to prosecute a Scheme of Speculation with the money you have in this Country. I shall give you all the Assistance in my power to perfect it; altho I am not quite certain the train it is now in here would not prove as profitable as the one you project.

I have been at some pains to interest you as far as possible in our 8 p cent Loan, as apparently the most profitable of any plan of disposing of your money here; I have accordingly invested for you to the amount of 2800 Dollars at 8 p cent Interest payable half yearly;—this Stock in order to comply with your request I must sell in the Market, altho at present it has not risen above par.—you have likewise three Shares in the Bank of North America which will sell from 45 to 50 p Cent advance on the original sum; both these I shall as soon as possible convert into money & invest in Bills of Exchange on London which at present may be had at about £150 currency for £100 Sterling.

The five shares which you have in the Pennsylvania Bank I would not wish to sell immediately, as the price of that stock is at present very low, not above 13 or 14 p Cent advance on the original price, yet perhaps if I can find a cash purchaser and good Bills I may likewise dispose of those shares in order to comply with your wishes. The remainder of your money being at interest, some at 7 p Cent & some at 6, I cannot expect to call in on a sudden, but will do it as soon as it is practicable. As several Vessels are put up for different ports in England, I expect shortly to begin the operation you desire.

I am &c.

PHILADA 30 Dec 1799

MY DEAR PEGGY

I have been for some time past anxious to hear whether the Bill of Exchange for £150 Sterling which I purchased for you last Febry, has been received & paid—the two first Bills of the Sett, I have reason to think were captured, the third & last Bill I sent p the Ship *Adriana* last July, which I hope got safe to hand, as I see by the News papers a Ship of that Name is put up in London, to sail for Philada about the 1st of November.

There has been of late such a rise in Bills of Exchange that I doubt whether your projected plan communicated to me by your letter of the 9th of August last can be put in execution. I lost no time after the receipt of that letter to employ a broker to sell your bank stock for the purpose of investing the proceeds in Bills of Exchange. I found in 2 or 3 days afterwards that Bills were rising from 150 to 155 & soon to 160 and are now at 165 or par. I immediately stopt the sale of your Bank shares to give a little time for the falling of bills. The Broker had however sold one of your shares in the Bank of North America for 50 p cent advance & two of your shares in the Bank of Pennsylvania at 13 p cent advance;—the money arising from these sales I deposited in the bank of the United States, where it yet remains. I see no prospect at present of getting Bills under par, so that unless I receive further orders from you, I shall endeavour to reinvest that money in one or other of our banks. I thought it lucky the Broker had not disposed of your 8 p cents before this change had taken place especially as I have lately heard that dollars in England have risen considerably, which circumstance must likewise have interfered with your

project. As soon as I receive Dividends from the Banks & 8 per cent Interest from the Treasury I shall purchase a Bill for you in order to remit your annual Interest, let the price of Bills be what it may. I have been so much engaged in Court for six weeks past, that I have had but little opportunity of knowing how the mercantile Concerns of the Country go on.

My time has been the more engaged, as I have lately received the Appointment of Chief Justice of the State in the room of Mr McKean, who has been elected Governor.

The Salary of Chief Justice is one thousand pounds Currency per annum, yet I do not think it will be prudent in me to hold the Office for any great length of time even if Providence should prolong my life; the increasing labor of business to a man so far advanced in years will probably tend to impair my faculties as well as health. The story of the Arch Bishop of Granada in Gil Blas has often occurred to me; and I cannot bear the idea of betraying the loss of Intellect to others before I discovered it in myself. My health, thank God, as yet has not declined, indeed my headache has in a great measure left me. Yet being turned of Seventy, I have no reason to expect any long enjoyment of that valuable blessing; altho my friends are kind enough to flatter me that by constantly riding the Circuit, I shall long retain it.

I hope your charming little daughter is in better health than when you wrote. I have been told by others that she is very delicate. Your niece Peggy Burd is to be married in a few days to her Cousin Dan. Coxe, who has made a handsome fortune in trade.

Your sister Sally enjoys fine health and does not pine for the loss of Mr Foster who died with the Yellow fever last Summer: it is thought he retained his unsuccessful passion to the last.

If Bills of Exchange return to the low price they bore two or three months ago, your plan may be yet prosecuted if you chuse it;—for which I will endeavour to get in what money remains at interest in private hands & invest it in some Stock which may be readily sold whenever you think proper. I am with much love to you & yours

PHILADA 3 May 1800

DR. PEGGY

I received your very wellcome Letter of the 5th of February a few days ago;—and am glad to find the last years bill for £150

is paid. I now inclose you another for the same sum, which cost at the rate of 172½ p cent Exchange. I have reason to be still better pleased that I had not an opportunity of remitting your Money at the time you requested it, as most of the drawers at that time have met with misfortunes and particularly Mr. Peter Blight who was then the principal Drawer and tho before esteemed a very prosperous man has since stopped payment & will in all probability finally break for a very large Sum. The three shares of Bank Stock which I wrote you I had sold in order to buy Bills, I consider as still remaining yours, having applied the money to my own use, as if my own Shares were sold instead of yours.

You request to know the situation of the lands on Susquehannah River claimed by the Connecticut people. I am in hopes that dispute is in a way of being at last settled. Our Legislature passed a law last year to encourage the Pennsylvania claimants to convey their property in the Seventeen Townships settled by the Connecticut people to the State, to enable them to convey to the Settlers at a less price provided 40,000 acres were conveyed to the State within a limited time;—that number of acres & more have already been transferred, and Commissioners are appointed to value the Lands, who are limited to estimate the best Lands no higher than five dollars p acre & the worst Lands at one dollar & the others at intermediate prices according to their Value, when the whole is completed the State will pay the Pennsylvania Claimants at these rates, & sell them out to the Connecticut Settlers at about half the prices thus allowed, at which rate it is presumed there will be but little doubt of their accepting them. There are however other lands settled by the Connecticut people not within those Seventeen townships, and not included in this Arrangement;—these lands it is presumed the Settlers will be compelled to give up, as the Settlements on them were made after the decree at Trenton which fixt the right to be in Pennsylvania. The Value of Lands in that Country it is not possible to ascertain without knowing their Situation and Quality. The Lands which lie on the River are for the most part the most valuable: some of them, bottom lands, may be worth perhaps Six dollars an acre, other Lands may not be worth more than half or a quarter of a dollar an acre. Many Mountains & stony & barren lands have been included in some of the Surveys. Lands lying at a distance

from the River, not settled by the Connecticut people & surveyed some time ago under Pennsylvania Rights, good in quality, may be bought here for about one dollar per Acre, taking a large quantity together.

I am delighted to hear of the probable prosperity & good establishments of your Sons & the returning health of your charming daughter; this pleasure is alloyed however by what you say concerning your own Situation, the fullness of blood you complain of can only be abated by a Regimen & Evacuants. I mean not however to prescribe as you live in a Country where the best advice may be had.

Your Cousin Betsy Lawrence (formerly Betsy Allen) died a few days ago of a Consumption. Mr Tench Francis died yesterday of the Gout, and your Aunt Lawrence is expected to go in a few days from the effects of more than one apoplectic Stroke.

Your Cousin Nancy Allen, a charming Woman, is going off in another way, being bent on marriage with a Mr Greenleaf, maugre all the remonstrances of her friends.

All the branches of our own family are well and join sincerely in best Love to you & Yours. I am my dear Peggy most Affect^v Yours,

PHILADA 23 May 1801

MY DEAR PEGGY

I am this minute setting off on a Circuit & so hurried that I have but just time to inclose you a Bill of Exchange for £150 Sterling drawn by Jeremiah Warder on Rathbone, Hughes & Duncan of Liverpool but payable in London, Exchange at 160.

All that you love and love you here are well & join me in best affection to you & yours.

I am Dear Peggy most affect^vly yours

P.S. You have probably heard of your Sister Sally's loss of her little boy, who died about 2 or three months ago. He was a beautiful Child about 8 or 9 years old.

PHILADA 4th August 1801

MY DEAR DAUGHTER

With equal pleasure & pain I received your last letter of the 1st of June thro' Mr Bond; *pleasure* that you seem to have no com-

plaints as to your health & *pain* that you seem struggling with some pecuniary embarrassments, which you do not disclose, but I presume must arise from some unsuccessful negotiation. I have been always fearful of engaging in plans of Speculation which, failing of success, might strike too deep in their consequences;—every calamity however is rendered heavier by being suffered to dwell upon the mind; exert yourself my dear child, & permit not your spirits to be too deeply affected, or bad health will follow.

I hope the Bill, I remitted to you on the 23rd of May last for £150 Sterling has been received and paid. I have now agreeably to your desire remitted to Miss Fitch for your Use a Bill of Exchange for £500 Sterling drawn by Thomas & John Clifford on W^m & John Dowell of Bristol but payable in London.

I hope you have heard of the Welfare of your Son James, as the affairs of Egypt appear to be in a favorable train for England.

I am much obliged to Mrs Liston for calling upon you as she promised us she would do; you say she gave you much information respecting the family, one article of which I presume (from what you write to your sister Betsy) is that Sally is about to be married; if this had been a matter fixed, she would certainly before this have communicated it to you, but the world is too apt to pronounce positively upon such subjects before the parties themselves have made up their minds upon them;—the truth is that Mr Lawrence has been very attentive to her for some time past & I have reason to think him not disagreeable to her—but there are two strong objections, which may possibly prevent the match from ever taking place, 1st the Children by two former Wives, two of them young Women living in his family & 2nd the leaving Philadelphia to reside in New York which she seems much averse to, at least during my life:—the latter objection I believe he would have no difficulty in removing, as he is a Man of handsome fortune & could reside without inconvenience in any part of America—but the former objection cannot well be obviated unless his elder Children could be married off;—in this doubtful state the subject remains & will probably remain for some time. I thought proper to apprize you of the truth as I find the Report has reached England & you should know the whole.

In order to raise the £500 Sterling I have sold four of your Shares in the bank of Pennsylvania, at a good advance.

PHILADA 10th August 1801

MY DEAR PEGGY

On the 4th Inst I inclosed to Miss Fitch agreeably to your direction a Bill of Exchange for £500 Sterling under cover to John Lane, Esq., at the same time I wrote a Line to you. I have now sent another Bill of the same Sett under the same Cover.

Since the receipt of your last letter of the 1st of June, we have seen a Newspaper Account of Gen^l A's death & most heartily sympathize with you on this occasion. I am at a loss to think what would be the most eligible plan of life for you in future, probably you have by this time settled it for yourself; if you should incline to come to America, I shall receive you into my house & Arms with the most heartfelt Welcome; in that case your little lovely daughter will accompany you. I cannot help however suspecting that the Situation of your dear Sons will obstruct such a resolution; their Country is certainly England; there they must expect their Advancement in life, to which you will probably think your presence will abundantly Contribute, independently of the uneasiness you would endure in parting with them. Whatever your plan may be, you will undoubtedly communicate it to me, & in whatever way I can afford you assistance you may rely on my best endeavours to do it.

My best love attends you & yours. I am most sincerely yr affect father.

PHILADA 10 Nov 1801

MY DEAR DAUGHTER

On my return from a long Circuit a few days ago I received your two favors of the 5th of July & 5th of August. You may be assured I could not read the distressing account of your Situation with indifference, nor indeed without extreme Pain. I wish I could fly to afford you every comfort & advice in my power, but age & every circumstance of my life forbid it. You are in some degree happy in having made friends who interest themselves in your behalf, still you are deprived of your natural connections.

I will make no reflections upon the causes of your distress; sometimes the best planned Schemes fail through unavoidable Accidents; it is of less consequence to account for Misfortunes, than to apply the most practicable means to alleviate them.

I observe the General's property, though not large, is much dispersed and difficult to collect. If it were possible for me to give any assistance with regard to the Canada Lands I should with great alacrity make the Attempt, but that Country & ours are as separate as to their internal Concerns as if they lay in different quarters of the globe, nor have a friend there to whom I could apply for help.

I am much grieved to find you have a reliance upon your brother's debt. I thought you had long since been convinced of his inability to pay it; both he & his partner Footman became insolvent & the latter when he died left many heavy debts which his little property was totally insufficient to discharge. As to your brother, he is not possessed of a single Shilling: he is indeed incapable of supporting his large family of Children by the little business he has in his profession at Burlington without my continual contributions; without them he & they must indeed starve. As to my paying that large debt which he owes to you, I am by no means bound or inclined to do it; altho it be a debt from one child to another. I never participated in the contracting it, nor did I suspect it existed till more than two years after. If the creditors of General Arnold should be disposed to commence a prosecution against him he will doubtless take the advantage of the general bankrupt Law of the United States. Notwithstanding the unfavorable state of that business, I have made a provision in my Will for compounding the debt, altho with a sum much inferior to the demand; this is all I am capable of doing, considering my present Situation. Altho' I may be said to be possessed of a handsome property, yet it lies in such a way as that it cannot command money, it consisting chiefly of back lands & houses in this City, the Rents of which are much reduced & subject to heavy taxes. I indeed hold at present an Office which yields £1000 a year our Money but that Office I must soon resign, as my advanced Age, considering the severe duty, I am bound to perform, incapacitates me from executing it to my own Satisfaction.

After this I shall have need of all the produce of my Estate (which at most is but a very moderate one) for my Support, in the way I have been used to live.

My son Edward altho entitled to less of my Confidence than my other Children, must be prevented from suffering real want & this will necessarily add to my Expenses.

The Bill of Exchange for £500 Sterling which you desired me to send, I hope is long since accepted, having transmitted it to Miss Fitch as long ago as the 4th of August. Whatever upon Reflection you desire me to do with the Remainder of your Money shall be complied with, altho I was in hopes that the whole would have been suffered to remain here as yielding you a better interest than can be got in England. This money I have no idea of General Arnold's creditors having any hold of; it was made up of the Savings of your own pension, transmitted to me for the separate use of yourself & your Children & never having been in his possession can in no way I think be considered as his property or subject to his debts.

I most heartily sympathize with you in your distresses which must likewise be increased by the public distresses of the Country you inhabit; by a threatened Invasion & enormous taxes. It is in vain however to repine, altho we cannot avoid feeling. God send you fortitude to carry you through. I feel much obliged to Mr Coxe & the Miss Fitch's for their very kind attention to you & your affairs.

My best Love to your dear Children, and believe me to be what I ever shall be in sincerity & truth,

Your very affect & loving

FATHER.

P.S. Please to tender my very respectful & grateful Compliments to Miss Fitch for her most obliging Letter at a time when your distress being so heavy upon you as to disable you from writing yourself.

PHILADA 7th Feby 1802

MY DEAR DAUGHTER;

I had the pleasure of receiving your Affectionate Letter of the 2nd of December last a few days ago:—that pleasure however was far from being unmixed with Pain, considering the distressed State of your mind arising from the embarrassed State of your Affairs and the great trouble and anxiety necessarily attendant upon your Situation. You have however naturally a Strength of mind which with the Exertions you are capable of, will I flatter myself enable you to go through your arduous task to your Satisfaction. I am sensible of the great & uncommon difficulties you have had to struggle with, beyond which usually falls to the lot of most of your Sex. Yet I be-

seech you, be not too much dismayed, call forth all your mental & bodily faculties to your assistance, and let the well being of your dear Children stimulate you to every exertion in your Power: it is a very painful Reflection, for an old man descending gradually to his grave, to find a beloved Child so distressed without having the power of affording her any essential relief: if I was a younger man I would not hesitate to take a voyage to England to endeavour to comfort you: as it is I am too feeble to attempt it. God bless you my dear Child, & support you under your Afflictions. It must be some consolation to you (as it is to me) that your two eldest boys are in so fair a Road to prosperity. Their Activity with your good Advice, I fear not will bring great Comfort to your mind—guard them against the extravagance that young men in their Situation are frequently prone to; the Army is a School of Honor, but it is likewise a School of Dissipation and the more their Spirit, the more their danger.

As to your Claim to lands in Canada, it was natural for you to suppose I might give you some proper advice, as I reside in the same quarter of the Globe, but really there is not a creature there that I have any knowledge of, nor do I know who to apply to here, that can give me information or assistance on that Subject;—it seems to me that if you can get any thing of Value for your Claim in England, it would be as well to sell it, unless you have a prospect of sending over one of your Sons to look after it, which is not likely to be the Case.

Every time I think of my Son's Debt to you, I feel a pang at my heart. In my last I wrote you all I can say on that Subject; I shall subjoin to this an extract from that letter, lest the original should have miscarried. I applied to Mr John Mifflin, to know what has been done with Edward's Bond, he tells me that all the papers relating to that subject were forwarded to Mr William Sheddin of New York from whom they had been originally received.

As to the Estate at Mount Pleasant, M^cPherson's debt to Osborne swallowed it all up, except about 30 acres which was subject to similar Mortgage to one Mason, which I believe neither General Arnold nor myself knew any thing of, this has not been yet sold under the Mortgage, but I expect every day to hear of the commencement of some proceedings against it. I believe little if anything is to be expected from it. I will however agree-

ably to your request transmit you by the next opportunity a Copy of the Settlement from the Office where it is recorded.

This being about the time of receiving your Bank Dividends, and it being expected that Exchange will rise, I inclose you a Bill of Exchange for £120 Sterling drawn by Jeremiah Warder on William Barber & Co. Merchants in Liverpool, but payable in London, at par, indorsed to yourself.

I am with true affection my dear Peggy,
Yours &c.

(To be continued.)